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**Fifty-fifth session**
Items 9, 10, 11, 20, 37, 39, 61, 62, 74, 94, 96, 101, 102 and 116 of the provisional agenda*
**General debate**
**Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization**
**Report of the Security Council**
**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance**
**Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the special session of the General Assembly in this regard**
**Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies**
**United Nations reform: measures and proposals**
**Strengthening of the United Nations system**
**General and complete disarmament**
**Macroeconomic policy questions**
**Sustainable development and international economic cooperation**
**Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)**
**Globalization and interdependence**
**Human rights questions**

## Letter dated 17 August 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward herewith the memorandum of the Government of Mongolia on enhancing the role of the United Nations in promoting the security interests of small States (see annex).

* A/55/150.

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I should be most grateful if it is circulated as a document of the Millennium Summit and Millennium Assembly of the United Nations, under items 9, 10, 11, 20, 37, 39, 61, 62, 74, 94, 96, 101, 102 and 116 of the provisional agenda.

(*Signed*) Jargalsaikhan **Enkhsaikhan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations

**Annex to the letter dated 17 August 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

**Memorandum of the Government of Mongolia on enhancing the role of the United Nations in promoting the security interests of small States**

The Millennium Summit of Heads of State and Government of the UN member States and the Millennium Assembly provide a good opportunity for the international community to reflect on the common history and common experience of running world affairs in 55 years since the establishment of the United Nations. The United Nations lived through the Cold War period and embarked on the road of reform and renovation. It is generally recognized that despite its failures and setbacks in some fields, this world Organization has proved its relevance and importance.

In the new century which will be predominantly characterized by the growing globalization and interdependence, the role of the United Nations and other international organizations is expected to further increase requiring greater efficiency and effectiveness of their activities and improved capacity to meet the existing and emerging challenges.

For a small state, like Mongolia, the United Nations is of a special value in terms of safeguarding its interests, lending its voice on global issues and promoting its development. Mongolia, therefore, strongly favours further enhancement of the UN role and its credibility, democratization of its work.

This Memorandum elaborates on Mongolian Government's views on the role of the United Nations in the 21st century particularly in regard to promoting security interests of small States.

Globalization being a defining feature of the new Millennium, small States, like other countries, seriously weigh its implications for their survival and security. As it is rightly stated in Bangkok Declaration of UNCTAD X, globalization can be a powerful and dynamic force for growth and development. "If it is properly managed, the foundations for enduring and equitable growth at the international level can be laid". However many countries in the world, especially small developing countries, still are not in a position and condition to share on an equal footing the benefits that globalization offers. A foremost challenge for the international community is therefore the creation of an enabling environment for them to share the benefits. This end requires, among other things, that globalization is not left to the rules of market only. The United Nations and other international organizations should play increased role in managing this process.

In this age of challenges and opportunities, small States increasingly perceive their security as dependent on their participation in regional and international integration. The most crucial challenges for the developing countries involve, therefore, ensuring their integration and equitable membership in the multilateral trading system and obtaining an improved market access for their exports. Mongolia continues to believe that relevant United Nations organizations could do more to help developing countries integrate into regional and international processes.

Mongolia notes with regret the shrinkage in development assistance from donor countries for it is a critical factor for them to succeed in the pursuit of their developmental and other national interests. Official development assistance, considered to be the most direct expression of international solidarity for development, remains a major factor for their stability and sustainable development. In this regard, Mongolia attaches a great importance to the high-level intergovernmental meeting on financing for development to be held in 2001.

In addition, the burden of external debt continues to cause serious problems to the efforts of developing countries, especially least developed countries to bring about social and economic progress. Mongolia believes that this issue should be resolved in a way that would provide a faster, deeper and broader debt relief. In this context Mongolia notes the importance of implementing the proposals that were made by the G-8 at their Cologne and Okinawa Summits.

In order to ensure that the benefits of globalization and development are shared by all countries, it is important that countries in disadvantaged location, facing specific difficulties and serious constraints in their development efforts, are provided with preferential treatment and support. As is known, excessive transport costs are a common feature for most developing countries, especially for LDCs, island and land-locked States. In overall, the share of freight costs in import value is twice as high in developing countries (8.1 per cent) as against developed countries (4.1 per cent); in land-locked and island LDCs, freight costs range between 12 and 40 per cent of import values. For many developing countries, high transport costs are the major barrier preventing access to foreign markets.

With underdevelopment, poverty, social inequities, instability and insecurity persisting in many developing countries, the Government of Mongolia believes that an important challenge that confronts the international community today is the creation of suitable conditions for eradicating the curse of poverty which afflicts many of them, and achieving

their sustainable development. In this connection it underlines the importance of implementing fully and in a speedy manner the decisions and recommendations of the high-level United Nations conferences, especially the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights and the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development and its follow-up meeting.

The goals of development and prosperity could be achieved only through joint efforts and genuine partnerships across the borders and within every society. The possibilities and potential of such a partnership cannot be overemphasized in the age of globalization and interdependence.

Access to knowledge and information is also an important factor that strengthens the security of small States and enables them to capitalize on developmental opportunities. Therefore, it is extremely important that each and every developing nation has an equal access to information and information technologies and be supported by the UN in its endeavour to acquire experience and technology on preferential terms. The Government of Mongolia believes that the dissemination of experience and information technology should become one of the priority areas in our own efforts as well as in our cooperation with the entire UN system.

The degradation of the earth's soil and depletion of water resources, being compounded by climate change and global warming affect the stability and security of small States, threatening, among other things, their agricultural production and upsetting human settlement patterns. In case of Mongolia, whims and patterns of nature have a dramatic effect on its economy and the well being of its people. The "Dzud", heavy snowfall, that occurred in the winter of 1999/2000, provided one of the latest and worst environmental afflictions. An estimated 500,000 people, or almost 20% of the population have been affected with the loss of up to three million heads of livestock during this calamity and in its aftermath. Many herders' families have moved in a matter of months from being relatively well-off to extremely poor through the loss of their entire herd. The Government of Mongolia shares the view that with the toll from natural disasters increasing world-wide, a serious and well-designed international strategy is needed. Its main elements should include, *inter alia*, emergency response to catastrophes, disaster mitigation and preventive measures.

Development and disarmament remain complementary and mutually-reinforcing goals in the world community. It is true especially with the increasing acceptance of broader concept of security, which goes beyond security against external military threat, incorporating non-military

threats to security as well as threats emanating internally from civil conflicts and violence.

The resolution of pressing issues in the disarmament field has direct bearing on enhancing the security of small States. In this regard the Government of Mongolia reiterates its position on bringing the CTBT into force as soon as possible. *It continues to stand for* the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime and further implementation of the NPT, the preservation and *strict implementation* of the ABM Treaty as well as for an early conclusion of a universal and verifiable Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty. In doing so it appreciates the positive steps taken unilaterally, bilaterally and multilaterally, such as the ratification by the Russian Duma of the CTBT and the START II treaties and the 2000 NPT Review Conference which brought about the consensus of the States Parties on new efforts toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mongolia is pleased to note that the above Conference, while recognizing the importance of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, welcomed and supported the declaration by Mongolia of its nuclear-weapon-free status, and took note of the adoption by the Mongolian parliament of legislation defining that status as a unilateral measure to ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons on its territory.

Mongolia fully shares the legitimate concerns of the world community over the global proliferation of small arms and light weapons, especially in areas of armed conflict given their destabilizing effect and the role they play as the principal instruments of violence in civil conflicts and civilian casualties. Mongolia welcomes in this connection the holding of an international conference on the illicit arms trade in all its aspects in the year 2001, the preparations for which are already under way.

The fact that "the total world military expenditure increased by 2.1 per cent in real terms in 1999 and amounted to roughly $780 billion representing 2.6 per cent of the world gross national product (GNP)" also reinforces the need to make tangible progress in the field of disarmament.

United Nations General Assembly resolution 49/31 on the Protection and Security of Small States recognized that small States may be particularly vulnerable to external threats and acts of interference in their internal affairs and stressed the vital importance of the unconditional respect by all States of all the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity,

non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and the peaceful settlement of disputes, and their consistent application. In this connection it should be underlined that globalization and interdependence should not be used to the detriment of the interests of small States' independence and sovereignty.

Democracy, promotion of human rights, as well as the existence of transparent and accountable governments are inalienably important elements of security and development. The *International Conference on Human Security* organized by the Government of Mongolia in cooperation with the UNDP in May 2000 in Ulaanbaatar, highlighted the role of an informed and mature civil society in the country as the central building block for human and national security, emphasizing that empowered and pro-active citizens have the capacity and capability to reinforce their own well-being and individual security and hence, their national security.

In this era of globalization, the role of the United Nations, with its objectives, principles and universal membership, remains the most appropriate body to serve the interests of small States. Mongolia, therefore, continues to stand for the enhancement of its role in all spheres, including development assistance. The Government of Mongolia believes that the new proposals, contained in the UN Secretary - General's Millennium Report, could serve as a good basis for our future actions in this regard. In this connection it shares the emphasis made in the report on reforming the Security Council given its role in new international environment of democratization and interdependence.

Mongolia, which has achieved encouraging results in its economic reform and democratic restructuring, associates its security in the coming decades with its active and equitable participation in regional and international affairs alongside with consolidation of our bilateral ties with the countries of the region and beyond as well as with international development cooperation which has been vital in overcoming the hardships associated with its transition to a market economy, its disadvantaged geographical location and severe climate conditions. In implementing these tasks, Mongolia accords a particular emphasis to its relations with other countries and cooperation within the United Nations and other international organizations such as UNCTAD which is helping in the development of a legal framework on transit transportation in the sub-region of Northeast Asia. Mongolia believes that the agreement will not only take into account the specifics of Mongolia but also meet international standards and expectations.

Mongolia, as a small State , is taking efforts to contribute in its own way to strengthening international peace and security. It declared its territory a nuclear-weapon-free zone in 1992. Today, Mongolia is working to strengthen its international security and nuclear-weapon-free status in the light of the UN General Assembly resolution 53/77D entitled "Mongolia's International Security and Nuclear-Weapon-Free Status". It believes that a clearly defined and internationally recognized status would be Mongolia's practical contribution to promoting stability and predictability in North East Asia where the interests of 4 of the world's major powers intersect.

The above-mentioned are some of the challenges affecting the security situation of small States with particular emphasis on the situation in Mongolia in the coming decades of the new Millennium. The Government of Mongolia believes that the Millennium Summit and Millennium Assembly will give a powerful impetus to meeting the existing challenges and provide a clear direction for addressing new and emerging challenges.

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**Fifty-fifth session**
Item 34 (a) of the provisional agenda*
**Oceans and the law of the sea: Consideration of elements relating to oceans and seas, including improvement of coordination and cooperation**

## Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the letter dated 8 June 2000 from the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization concerning acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships and seafarers in various parts of the world (see annex).

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# Annex

## Letter dated 8 June 2000 from the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

The increasing number and seriousness of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships and seafarers in various parts of the world continues to be a major concern of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and its member Governments.

IMO deeply appreciates the support of the General Assembly of the United Nations for its efforts to prevent and suppress this scourge and to ensure that the perpetrators of these unlawful acts do not go unpunished. A clear demonstration of this was provided in resolution 54/31 on "Oceans and the law of the sea", adopted on 24 November 1999 by the General Assembly, which, among other things, called upon States to cooperate fully with IMO and to implement the relevant IMO guidelines.

At its recent seventy-second session (17-26 May 2000), the IMO Maritime Safety Committee, while acknowledging the positive action of the General Assembly and being appreciative of its support, was of the opinion that there might be additional assistance which could be provided from other bodies within the United Nations system which would ensure that seafarers and ships could safely and peacefully engage in international maritime activities. It therefore asked me to bring the matter to the attention of the United Nations for such additional action as it might deem appropriate.

I would therefore appreciate it if you could once again bring this to the attention of the members of the General Assembly when consideration is being given to ocean affairs.

(*Signed*) W. A. **O'Neil**
Secretary-General

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**Fifty-fifth session**
Items 8 and 123 of the provisional agenda*

**Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee**

**Pattern of Conferences**

## Letter dated 16 August 2000 from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I am writing in connection with the provisions of section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243, according to which no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly may meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly. Those subsidiary organs that wish to meet during a regular session of the Assembly shall submit their requests through the Committee on Conferences.

I wish to inform you that the Committee on Conferences has received requests from the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, the committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Preparatory Committee for the High-level International Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development, the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to meet in New York during the main part of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

The Committee on Conferences, having carefully considered these requests and the reasons for them, has no objection, on the strict understanding that such meetings would have to be accommodated within available facilities and services so that the activities of the General Assembly itself are not adversely affected, and every effort would be made to make more efficient use of conference services.

Accordingly, I should be grateful if the General Assembly would explicitly authorize the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Working Group on

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the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Preparatory Committee for the High-level International Intergovernmental Meeting on Financing for Development, the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to meet in accordance with their requests, subject to the conditions referred to in the foregoing paragraph.

(*Signed*) Valeria María **Gonzalez Posse**
Chairperson
Committee on Conferences